



*Office of the United States Attorney  
District of Arizona*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **MAN SENTENCED TO SEVEN YEARS FOR ROLE IN PISTOL WHIPPING ILLEGAL ALIENS**

PHOENIX—Asuncion Flores-Gutierrez, 33, of Sinaloa, Mexico, was sentenced here today to seven years in federal prison, by U.S. District Judge Mary H. Murguia. His two co-defendants, Jose Benavides-Ochoa, 25, and Mario Leon-Olea, 56, both from Sinaloa, Mexico, were sentenced to seven years and five years respectively. All three defendants pleaded guilty to Possession or Use of a Firearm in furtherance of a Crime of Violence with the crime of Hostage Taking.

On March 14, 2007, agents from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement located a stash house on West Roma Avenue in Phoenix. At that time, it was determined that the three defendants and a juvenile smuggler were holding illegal aliens at gunpoint. Aliens held at the house had guns held to their heads, were verbally threatened and had their smuggling fees raised. At least two aliens were beaten with pistols when they did not have money to pay their fee.

The investigation in this case was conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Phoenix Police Department. The prosecution was handled by Lisa Jennis Settel, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-07-412-PHX-MHM  
RELEASE NUMBER: 2008-008(Flores-Gutierrez)

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